CULMSTOCK RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH LIBRARY

MEDICAL OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1925. (A SURVEY REPORT)

To the Chairman and Members of the Culmstock Rural District Council.

Mr Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for 1925 as follows :-

Natural and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area.	20972 acres.
Population (1921).	3178.
do. estimated for 1925.	3230
Inhabited houses (1921)	780
Families or separate occupiers.	791
Rateable Value.	£35867
Sum represented by a penny rate.	£106

The area is mainly agricultural, with no occupations injurious to health.

Vital Statistics.

Births. 27 male and 26 female. Total 53.(67 in 1924).
Birth Rate. 16·4 per 1000 (20·7 in 1924)
No illegitmate births recorded during the year.

Deaths. 20 male and 18 female. Total 38 (41 in 1924). This total includes 11 deaths outside the district transferred into it for registration.
Death Rate, 11·7 per 1000 (12·6 in 1924).
Deaths of Infants under 1 year total 3, giving an Infantile Mortality Rate of 56·5 per 1000 births (44·5 in 1924)

Causes of death :-

Heart Disease	14.	Prematurity	1
Primary Anaemias.	3	Myelitis.	1
Kidney disease.	3	Pneumonia (all kinds)	3
Malignant disease.	7	Senility	2
Intestinal obstruction.	2	Accidental.	2
		Total	38

Ages at which death occurred :-

Under 1 year.	20-30.	30-40.	40-50.	50-60.	60-70.	70-80.	80-90.	90 and upwards.
3	1	2	1	7	11	6	5	2

Total 38.

During April and May no deaths occurred in the district although two were recorded from outside.

Infectious Diseases.

From January to August inclusive there are only 1 case of Scarlet Fever and 1 of Chicken Pox to report, but from then onwards, i.e. from September 6th to November 6th, a measles epidemic of considerable magnitude prevailed, the total number of notifications actually received being 97, all except one occuring in Hemyock Parish; this represented 49 separate households. All ages between 2 and 36 suffered, but the majority occurred between the ages of 10 and 16. The origin of the outbreak was traced to contact with a case at Blandford. On October 8th the Managers were recommended to close the Schools at Hemyock for three weeks and on the 26th the epidemic not having spent itself, a further closure for 3 weeks was resorted to. There were some cases of severe pneumonia following measles, but I am glad to report no deaths.

Of other diseases 1 case of Scarlet Fever occurred at Culmstock in January and another at Holcombe Rogus in November. 1 case of diphtheria reported from Westleigh in September. Two cases of mumps also notified from Holcombe Rogus in September and 1 case of pulmonary tuberculosis occurred in Hemyock in September.

Pathological Examinations. 8 diphtheria contacts were examined and found negative.
4 examinations in tubercular suspects proved negative.

Hospitals etc.

Tuberculosis :- Hawkmoor Sanitorium (Bovey Tracey) for early cases.
Ivybank Dispensary (Exeter).
Both under County administration.

Maternity and Children. :- No special Institutions available apart from the General Hospitals.

Fever (other than Small pox) :- Tiverton Isolation Hospital under recommendation of the Medical Officer of Health.

Small pox. :- Arrangements are under auspices of the County Authority.

Ambulance facilities. An ambulance is sent to fetch infectious cases from Tiverton Isolation Hospital. For accident and non-infectious cases much use is made of private and hired cars, but I am ~~afraid~~ of opinion that a Motor Ambulance available for the district is greatly needed.

Clinics and Treatment Centres. Special arrangements are offered by the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital for the treatment of venereal diseases. It is gratifying to note the almost complete absence of these affections in your district.

Chemical Work. Laboratory tests are undertaken by the Medical Department of the Devon County Council in respect to tuberculosis, diphtheria, typhoid etc.

The prevalence of disease since 1920 is seen in the following table:-

	1921.	1922.	1923.	1924.	1925.
Typhoid.	1	-	-	-	-
Tuberculosis (pulmonary)	5	3	3	7	1
do. (other forms)	1	1	-	-	-
Pneumonia.	1	6	-	-	-
Encephalitis Lethargica.	1	-	-	1	-
Scarlet Fever	17	14	1	3	1
Malignant disease.	5	-	-	-	-
Epidemic jaundice.	4	-	-	-	-
Anthrax.	-	1	-	-	-
Measles.	-	89	7	-	97
Whooping Cough.	-	19	26	23	-
Chicken Pox.	-	5	3	-	-
Puerperal fever.	-	-	1	-	-
Diphtheria.	-	-	-	-	1
Mumps.	-	-	-	-	2

Only 1 new case of pulmonary tuberculosis was notified during the year, and 1 ~~case~~ death occurred of a previously notified case.

Professional Nursing in the Home is satisfactorily provided for by the various Nursing Associations in the area. All the nurses hold the C.M.B qualification and their services are greatly valued. There is no provision for the nursing of infectious cases. There are 3 registered Midwives practising in the district.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority include a Medical Officer and Inspector both part-time Officers with moiety of salaries paid by Exchequer Grant.

There are no Local Acts nor special Local Orders in force in your Area.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water. The supply is entirely from wells, except at Holcombe Rogus, which benefits by a system owned by the Rayer and Sandford Estates. Where new wells have been sunk the water has proved to be exceptionally good. The public well at Hemyock is now quite satisfactory for drinking and domestic purposes. Many of the wells in the district have been sadly neglected in the past but improvements are being effected where possible and the water supply on the whole campares very favourably with that of other districts. Three new wells have been sunk, and 3 old ones cleaned out and repaired. Four samples were analysed during the year, no gross pollution was detected in any of them, but one shewed evidence of admixture with rain water.

Rivers and Streams. There have been no complaints of pollution.

Drainage and Sewerage. Your district being largely rural, drainage is usually arranged by owners of properties and your Council insists on connection with public sewers whenever possible. Such sewers exist at Culmstock and Hemyock. Ten new drains have been provided and repairs carried out on two. There is one new sewer at Culmstock.

Closet Accomodation. Largely of the E.C. type except in Culmstock and Hemyock where W.Cs connect with public sewers. Two privies were converted to E.Cs and eight conversions to W.Cs were effected. Three cases of insufficient closet accomodation were brought to notice and two of these are now remedied.

Scavenging. No organized arrangement exists for removal of refuse, but many householders would gladly pay a small rate for such a service.

Smoke abatement. No action has been necessary during the year.

Schools. There are 6 in number, they have all been inspected during the year and the sanitary conditions in each case are satisfactory. There is as yet no proper supply of drinking water to Hemyock School but two new wells in an adjoining field afford a satisfactory supply within easy reach.

Housing.

A shortage has been apparent in all the Parishes more especially at Hemyock. Your Council has taken steps to meet this shortage, 32 houses having been included in a scheme for erection. The total number of new houses erected was 13 (8 by the Local Authority and 5 by other bodies or persons), besides these there are 12 in course of construction. So that on the whole your Council is to be congratulated on a very creditable achievement.

No action has been necessary in the matter of overcrowding.

With regard to the general standard of housing in the area, many of the cottages are too old to justify the large expenditure necessary to adapt them to modern ideals. Reports are received by the Council and action taken to ensure that defects are remedied where possible.

There are no unhealthy areas within the meaning of the

Public Health Acts.

The existing Byelaws relative to houses are adequate and there is no need for alteration or of new regulations at present.

The number of houses inspected under Regulations 1910 was 75.

Action taken under Statutory powers - Nil.

18 plans of new houses were submitted for inspection, all were approved.

There are now no houses which can be classified as unfit for habitation.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Milk Supply. The wholesomeness of the milk has never been questioned. Retailers are few in number and all registered. Wholesale purveyors are also registered. The bulk of the milk is collected and taken to the Milk Factory.

Dairies, Milk Shop and Cowsheds. These number 98 to which 112 visits have been paid, inspections carried out and records taken all were satisfactory.

The Tuberculosis Order is conscientiously observed.

Meat Inspection. This is carried out by your Inspector who has special qualifications in this branch of his duties. He also arranges for the disposal of condemned carcases etc.

Shops and Slaughter Houses. Were freguently inspected and found to fulfil all requirements. In 1920 there were 4 un-registered Slaughter-Houses. In January, 1925 as also in December 1925 there were 5 all registered.

Bake Houses. These are 6 in number, all were inspected twice during the year, 1 minor defect was noted and remedied.

Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

The sanitary conditions of these are satisfactory.

There are no outworkers in your area.

I have the honor to be
Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

S.F.Huth. M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

District Medical Officer of Health.

Culmstock.
12th May, 1926.